

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently amended) A flat-folded personal respiratory face mask comprising:

a first portion and a second portion, connecting with each other along at least one common edge, flat-foldable along the common edge;

securing means to secure said ~~face mask~~ first and second portions on the face of a wearer thereby forming an effective respiratory seal as the wearer inhales and ~~release~~ releasing the respiratory seal as the wearer exhales, the securing means attaching to the face mask at a location substantially away from the periphery of the face mask to provide a holding force therefrom; and

filtering means associated with the first and second portions for ~~[[to]]~~ filtering ~~inhaling~~ inhaled air.

2. (Currently amended) A flat-folded face mask as claimed in claim 1 wherein said effective respiratory seal covers a minimum yet essential area of the nose~~[[,]]~~ and chin ~~and two symmetrical edges connecting and~~.

3. (Currently amended) A flat-folded face mask as claimed in claim 2 wherein said essential area is adaptive to an extensive range of face sizes which is defined by eye-to-chin distance ~~at least range from~~ ranging from at least 94mm to ~~104~~ 114 mm as shown in figure 16 and figure 17.

4. (Currently amended) A flat-folded face mask as claimed in claim 1 wherein said securing means ~~includes~~ comprises an elastic headband ~~providing holding force (F)~~ at a location substantially away from the periphery of the face mask.

5. (Currently amended) A flat-folded face mask as claimed in claim 1

wherein said filtering means includes the main body of the face mask made of filtering sheet material.

6. (Currently amended) A flat-folded face mask as claimed in claim 1 wherein said filtering means includes a filter part integrated in the main body of the face mask.

7. (Currently amended) A flat-folded face mask as claimed in claim 1 wherein said filtering means includes a user replaceable filter part.

8. (Currently amended) A process for making the flat-folded personal respiratory face mask as claimed in claim 1 comprising:

first step of folding a roll of sheet material along the length of the sheet material;
second step of welding the folded sheet material along a pre-defined edge; and
third step of cutting the shape of the face mask in the flat-folded configuration out of the roll of sheet material.

9. (Currently amended) The process for making the flat-folded personal respiratory face mask as claimed in claim 8 wherein said roll of sheet material includes ~~[[as]]~~ at least two layers ~~construction~~.

10. (Currently amended) The process for making the flat-folded personal respiratory face mask as claimed in claim 1 comprising:

folding a flat sheet material;
welding the folded sheet material along a pre-defined edge; and
cutting the shape of the face mask in the flat-folded configuration out of the sheet material.

11. (Currently amended) The process for making the flat-folded personal respiratory face mask as claimed in claim ~~[[8]]~~ 10 wherein said sheet material includes as least two layers ~~construction~~.

12. (Previously Presented) A personal respiratory face mask for covering the nose and mouth of a wearer comprising:

mask body, comprising at least two generally flat parts, made of air-permeable filter media, connectable to each other along a vertical, common edge;

said mask body being foldable to a first flat configuration for ease of storage and carrying, and capable of being unfolded to a second, convex open configuration for covering the nose and mouth of a wearer, forming a tentlike appearance with said common edge running from the top to the bottom of the mask body;

said common edge serving to hold the mask body away from the nose and mouth of the wearer;

means for filtering inhaled air;

means for securing the mask body against the wearer's face, imposing a force (F), along said common edge, substantially away from the periphery of the mask body and at an elevation corresponding to the space between the nose and mouth, and directed toward the face of the wearer;

wherein the peripheral portions of the mask body are more flexible to accommodate the face shape and provide a respiratory seal with positive pressure applied from the outside during inhalation, while allowing exhaled air to pass easily through the peripheral flexible portions.

13. (Previously Presented) The personal respiratory face mask according to claim 12, wherein the means for securing the mask body is an elastic headband or earloop that contacts the mask body along said common edge, substantially away from the periphery of the mask body and at an elevation that corresponds to the space between the nose and mouth.

14. (Previously Presented) The personal respiratory face mask according to claim 12, wherein the means for securing the mask body can be attached and released from the mask body by the wearer.

15. (Previously Presented) The personal respiratory face mask according to claim 12, wherein stiffeners are incorporated into the mask body from said common edge toward

the face in the same elevation as said force (F) applied, reinforcing the mask body where stress is strongest and allowing the rest of the mask body to be more flexible.

16. (Previously Presented) The personal respiratory face mask according to claim 12, wherein the means for securing the mask body is fixed onto the mask body, at location(s) substantially away from the periphery of the face mask and near to said common edge.

17. (Previously Presented) A personal respiratory face mask for covering the nose and mouth of a wearer comprising:

mask body, comprising at least two generally flat parts, connectable to each other along a vertical, common edge;

said mask body being foldable to a first flat configuration for ease of storage and carrying, and capable of being unfolded to a second, convex open configuration for covering the nose and mouth of a wearer, forming a tentlike appearance with said common edge running from the top to the bottom of the mask body;

said common edge serving to hold the mask body away from the nose and mouth of the wearer;

means for securing the mask body against the wearer's face, imposing a force (F), along said common edge, substantially away from the periphery of the mask body and at an elevation corresponding to the space between the nose and mouth, and directed toward the face of the wearer;

wherein the mask body is made of non-permeable material and the means for filtering inhaled air includes at least one filter insert which also functions as a stiffener, said means for filtering inhaled air is integrated in the mask body and the peripheral portions of the mask body are more flexible to accommodate the face shape and provide a respiratory seal with positive pressure applied from the outside during inhalation, while allowing exhaled air to pass easily through the peripheral flexible portions.

18. (Previously Presented) The personal respiratory face mask according to claim 17, wherein the means for securing the mask body is an elastic headband or earloop that contacts the face mask along said common edge, substantially away from the periphery of the

face mask and at an elevation that corresponds to the space between the nose and mouth.

19. (Previously Presented) The personal respiratory face mask according to claim 17, wherein the means for securing the mask body may be attached and released from the mask body by the wearer.

20. (Previously Presented) The personal respiratory face mask according to claim 17, wherein said filter insert can be replaced by the wearer.

21. (Previously Presented) The personal respiratory face mask according to claim 17, wherein the non-permeable material comprises any synthetic or natural material with suitable rigidity and flexibility, such as paper, plastic or leather.

22. (Previously Presented) The personal respiratory face mask according to claim 17, wherein said filter insert comprises a filter sheet media secured between a filter holder which is permanently attached to the mask body and a releasable filter guard.

23. (Previously Presented) The personal respiratory face mask according to claim 22, wherein said filter sheet media is fixed onto said filter guard and can be replaced by the wearer.

24. (Previously Presented) The personal respiratory face mask according to claim 17, wherein the means for securing the mask body is fixed onto the mask body, at location(s) substantially away from the periphery of the face mask and near to said common edge.